(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (PROF. CHAMAN LAL GUPTA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two contracts were signed with M/s. FXC International , U.S.A. Details of these contracts are given below :

(i) First contract was signed in January, 1996 for procurement of quantity 48 of Pilot Parachutes PSU-36. The value of the contract was US Dollar 2,01,600.

(ii) Second contract was signed in February, 1996 for procurement of quantity 200 Brake Parachutes PTK-29. The value of the contract was US Dollar 4,70,000.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The State Bank of India (FED) released the payment without checking the authenticity of document produced by the supplier.

(e) A civil suit is being filed in the competent court to recover the money.

Indo-US Executive Steering Groups Meeting in Honolulu

3425. SHRI GULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indo-US Executive Steering Group Meeting was held in Honolulu in December, 2002;

(b) whether any discussion was held to further bolster ties between the two armies; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (PROF. CHAMAN LAL GUPTA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir,

(c) The Indo-US Executive Steering Group Meeting of December, 2002 discussed issues relating to enhanced military interaction between India and United States. These included issues relating to joint exercises and exchange visits of military experts in specific areas. Military operations to counter terrorism were also discussed.